

SHERINGHAM URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

AND OF THE

SANITARY INSPECTOR AND SURVEYOR

FOR

THE YEAR 1948..

SHERINGHAM URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR

THE YEAR 1948.

Mr. Chairman, Mrs. Howlett and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present the Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year ending 31st. December, 1948.

The preparation of this Report has been delayed, as it concerns the period of office of my two immediate predecessors; and for the same reason it is not practicable to attempt more than an account of the principal features of the Year in question and a statistical survey.

The Post of Medical Officer of Health for Sheringham is combined with that for Cromer and North Walsham, and with the Post of Assistant County Medical Officer for Area No. 2 of the County of Norfolk.

WEATHER. - The Spring was warm and fine, the Summer dull, and the Autumn very mild. The whole year was exceptionally dry, but fortunately no acute shortage of water occurred in the Urban District.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES. - Sheringham maintained its reputation for small totals of these, with only, tuberculosis being excepted, 45 notifications received; these were made up entirely of Measles and Whooping Cough in children of School age. The number of cases of Tuberculosis on the Register was substantially less than in 1947.

VITAL STATISTICS. - Little comment can be made on these, as the numbers are too small to enable significant conclusions to be drawn. Sheringham, however, appears to differ little from England and Wales as a whole.

FOOD POISONING. - No case was reported in the Year 1948.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION. - Up to July 5th. when this became the responsibility of the County Council, 20 persons were immunised.

NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE ACT, 1946. - This far-reaching measure came into operation on July 5th. While comparatively little change in the Public Health responsibilities of the Urban District Council took place, the repercussions of its coming into operation inevitably affected all departments dealing with the Nation's health. The County Council was affected more than the District Councils. Many new duties were imposed on it by the Act, and, to enable it to perform them, many of its Public Health functions were decentralised to Area Offices. Nine of these were established in Norfolk, Sheringham being served by Area No.2 Office, sited at Cromer.

Outside Local Government, we find the General Practitioner and Hospital Services largely under the control of the State. Free examination and treatment was extended to all, and at the end of 1948 the new regime, though only six months old, was working surprisingly smoothly.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION. - Visits were paid during the year by officials of the Local Government Boundary Commission. No Report had been made by the end of the year..

PROBLEM FAMILIES. - A note about these may be of interest, since they have only recently been recognised as a social phenomenon, and while only few examples exist in Sheringham, there are sufficient of them in the Country as a whole to constitute a matter of national importance. My attention has been drawn to them by Dr. Parker.

They present themselves as families whose standard of living is noticeably low, although they do not necessarily come from the lowest income groups. They are characterised by a generally irresponsible approach to life, and feckless conduct of their affairs. They are constantly in the public eye, whether from default of rent, neglect of their children, sanitary nuisance, or other cause. The essential sense that appears to be lacking is that of social responsibility. In some cases one or both of the parents are mentally subnormal, and in others illness or other cause has lowered their capacity to cope with the common problems of day-to-day life in the ordinary way.

Fortunately, much can be done to help them with suitable guidance. Apart from human considerations, which must always come first, it is, in fact, an economy to do so, since they are forced by their incapacity to make full use of the welfare facilities provided by all departments of the Local Authority.

Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area in Acres	...	...	...	...	...	...	929.
Population (Registrar General Estimate, 1948)	...	...	...	...	...	...	5,030.
Number of Inhabited Houses, 1948	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,539.
Total Rateable Value	...	...	...	...	...	...	£36,858.
Product of a Penny Rate	...	...	...	...	...	...	£146.

Social Conditions. The Urban District of Sheringham is situated on the North Coast of Norfolk, facing North. It is bounded by the sea on the North and by a low range of wooded hills which fall generally for a mile from the South, it adjoins the Erpingham Rural District on three sides, and has on its outskirts such picturesque places as the Roman Camp, Pretty Corner and the village of Upper Sheringham.

During the summer months visitors in abundance resort to Sheringham for the bracing air, fine sands, golf links and scenery.

The population is composed of (1) fishermen, (2) those whose business it is to let rooms and tradesmen, and (3) a constantly increasing class who resort to Sheringham for its natural beauties, its fine golf links, and its bracing air.

Extracts from Vital Statistics for the Year.

Total. Males. Females.

Live Births - Legitimate	72	37	35
Illegitimate... ..	3	2	1
Total	75	39	36

Illegitimacy Rate 4.00.

Birth Rate per 1,000 of estimated resident population 14.91.
Male. Female Total.

Still Births - Legitimate	1	-	1
Illegitimate	-	-	-
Total	1	1	1

Birth Rate - 1942 - 16.8 per 1,000 population.

1943 - 16.6 " "

1944 - 23.78 " "

1945 - 18.23 " "

1946 - 20.88 " "

1947 - 22.17 " "

England and Wales 1948 - 17.9 " "

Number of Women dying in, or in consequence of, childbirth:

From Sepsis Nil.

From Other causes Nil.

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age:

All Infants per 1,000 live births - 66.66

Number of deaths under one year of age:

Legitimate	Illegitimate	Total.
4	1	5

Death Rate, England 34.00

Deaths.	Total.	Males.	Females.
	50	25	25

Death Rate per 1,000 of estimated resident population - 9.94

Deaths Classified by Cause and Sex:

Cause of Death.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Non-pulmonary Tuberculosis ...	1	1	2
Cancer	2	1	3
Cerebral Haemorrhage.. ...	5	5	10
Heart Disease.	3	6	9
Other diseases of the Circulatory System	2	1	3
Peptic Ulcer..	1	2	3
Nephritis.	4	3	7
Premature Births..	2	-	2
Birth Injury..	1	1	2
Suicide... ..	-	1	1
All other causes..	4	4	8
Totals.	25	25	50

GENERAL PROVISIONS OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

Public Health Officers to the Local Authority.

Medical Officer of Health:

R. C. MACLEOD,
M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H., D.T.M. & H.

As from the 18th. of February, 1948.

W. S. PARKER,
M.B., Ch.B., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H., D.I.H.

Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor:

Mr. R. H. SERSHALL,
CERT.S.I.B., A.M.INST.S.E., M.R.SAN.I.,
Cert. R.S.I. Meat and Food Inspector.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

1. Water. - The Sheringham Gas and Water Company serve water to all the properties within the Urban District by a piped supply. The collecting ground, pumping station and reservoirs are situated in the Sheringham Woods, a situation which is isolated and enclosed approximately half-a-mile South of the town.

The water is derived:

- (a) From springs situated within the collecting grounds, and stored in reservoirs.
 - (b) From two deep wells sunk in chalk-400 feet deep approximately. The water is pumped into a reservoir at a higher level to supply by gravitation the high-lying parts of the town.
- (i) (a) Quality of Water. - Regular monthly samples of the Company's Water as supplied to the Sheringham consumers have been taken by the Council's Sanitary Inspector and submitted for bacteriological examination, the result of which has proved the water to be of excellent quality for drinking and domestic purposes.
 - (b) Quantity of Water Supply. - The quantity of water supplied in the Urban District is sufficient for all purposes during dry weather. The quantity of water obtained from the springs naturally varies a little during the summer and dry weather, but the level of the water in the wells varies little however much it is pumped and has never shown signs of failing.
- (ii) The Counties Public Health Laboratory carried out monthly bacteriological examinations and half-yearly chemical analysis of the treated water as supplied in this Urban District during the period under review, all of which proved to be of very high standard of purity. Daily tests were also carried out on the Spring and Well waters, both treated and untreated.

- (iii) The water supplied within the Urban District is not liable to plumbosolvent action, as the p.H. Reaction of the water is neutral or on the alkaline side of neutrality. All the water service pipes are laid on in galvanised wrought iron.
- (iv) No action has been found necessary in respect of any form of contamination of the water supply.
- (v) (a) Number of dwelling-houses supplied direct from public water mains 1474.
 Number of population supplied from public water mains.. 4830.
 (b) Number of dwelling houses supplied by means of stand pipes 65.
 Number of population supplied by means of stand pipes.., 200.

2. Drainage and Sewerage. - The Urban District is sewered throughout with a system which needs much improvement as it is not capable of dealing with an excessive and sudden rainfall. The outfall is well below ordinary low water mark in the North Sea. A firm of Consulting Engineers have been asked by the Council to prepare a Scheme for the improvement of the sewerage system.

3. Rivers and Streams. - Only one stream runs through the Urban District and it has not been necessary to take any action during the period to check pollution.

4. (a) Closet Accommodation. - All houses in the Urban District are fitted with water closets of a modern type. The sewerage system is flushed twice a week in the Summer months, and once a week in the Winter months. The dead-ends of the sewers are flushed by the use of a water cart in addition.

(b) Public Cleansing. - Dust-bins are emptied once weekly by the Council's two motor refuse collection vehicles. Twice weekly refuse collection is made during the Summer months from boarding houses and hotels. House refuse is disposed of by the method of controlled tipping on a site on the outskirts of the District.

(c) Schools. - The Schools are of a modern type, the water supply and sanitary conditions being quite satisfactory. In case of notifiable infectious diseases, the schools are at once visited by the Medical Officer of Health, the scholars inspected, and endeavour made to exclude infective children.

(d) Premises and Occupations Controlled by Bye-Laws. - There is no Common Lodging House or Offensive Trade in the Urban District.

5. SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

Report of the Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor :

(a) Inspections and Visits. - The following inspections and visits have been carried out during the period :

Inspections for housing defects and re-visits.....	49.
Sanitary routine inspections and re-visits.....	127.
Inspection of Slaughterhouses and Foodstuffs.....	71.
" " Food premises.....	35.
" " Dairies.....	45.
" " Factories and Bakehouses.....	9.
Visits in connection with Milk Sampling.....	45.
" " Water Sampling.....	9.
" " Infectious Disease.....	3.
Number of Rooms Disinfected.....	14.
Inspection of dirty premises and re-visits.....	11.
Drainage inspections and re-visits.....	18.
Drain tests.....	2.
Inspections and re-visits in connection with rat destruction.....	97.
Inspections and visits in connection with Council properties.....	31.
Inspections and visits in connection with requisitioned properties and the housing of persons inadequately housed.....	23.
Other Miscellaneous visits.....	87.

(b) Action taken in consequence of inspections:

Informal notices served.....	91.
Statutory notices served under the Public Health Act, 1936.....	2.

(c) Result of action taken in consequence of notices:

Defects remedied by Informal notices.....	85.
Defects remedied by Statutory notices.....	2.

(d) Proceedings under Sections 11 and 12 of the Housing Act, 1936:

Number of dwelling houses in respect of which an Undertaking not to use under Section 11 of the Housing Act, 1936, was accepted.....	Nil.
Number of dwelling houses in respect of which a Closing Order was made on part of the house under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936.....	1.

(e) Summary of work carried out as a result of informal and formal action:

Defective drains renewed.....	4.
Drains unblocked and cleansed.....	6.
Flushing apparatus provided to water closets.....	5.
" " repaired.....	3.
Trapped gullies provided.....	3.
Defective W.C. pedestals renewed.....	2.
" " seats renewed.....	5.
" " water storage cisterns renewed.....	2.
" sink waste pipes renewed and trapped.....	4.
" wash basin renewed.....	1.
" water service pipes repaired.....	3.
" yard paving repaired.....	3.
" roofs repaired.....	12.
" chimney stacks repaired or rebuilt.....	7.
" " pots renewed.....	3.
" eaves gutters repaired or renewed.....	5.
" rain water downpipes repaired or renewed.....	3.
" windows repaired.....	5.
" doors repaired.....	2.

Defective wall plaster repaired.....	9.
" ceiling plaster repaired.....	14.
" fireplaces repaired or renewed.....	7.
" floors repaired or renewed.....	5.
Water closets rebuilt.....	5.
Wash-house structures rebuilt.....	2.
Caps to drainage intercepting traps provided.....	1.
Damp walls treated.....	9.
Dangerous walls rebuilt.....	3.
Dirty premises cleansed.....	5.
Secondary ventilation to room provided.....	1.
Deposits of refuse removed.....	1.
Dustbins provided.....	13.

(f) Number of inspections and visits in connection with the issue of Building Licences under Regulation 56A of Defence (General) Regulations, 1939... 327.

Number of Building Licences issued under the above Regulation..... 246.

Total value of Building Licences issued.....£31,306.

Number of Building Plans submitted for approval..... 51.
 " " " " approved..... 49.
 " " " " disapproved..... 2.

" " New Houses erected during the year:
 By the Local Authority..... 9.
 By other bodies or persons..... 4.
 Rebuilding of War Destroyed houses..... 1.
 Conversion of premises in family units..... 8.

Number of New Houses, War Destroyed and Damaged Houses, and Premises being Converted in course of erection, rebuilding, repair or conversion at the 31st. of December, 1948:

New houses by the Local Authority..... 28.
 " " " other persons..... 1.

Visits in connection with inspection of foundations and footings..... 21.

Visits in connection with damp courses..... 25.
 " " building inspection..... 121.

Number of drain tests carried out in connection with new buildings..... 20.

The undermentioned amounts of salvaged materials have been collected during the period giving an income of £315 namely:

Metals	...	...	...	2¾ tons.
Rags	...	...	...	1¼ tons.
Paper	...	...	...	44 tons.

(g) Shops. - No action under this heading has been found necessary.

(h) Camping Sites. - There are no camping sites in the Urban District.

(i) Smoke Abatement. - No action under this heading has been found necessary.

(j) Swimming Baths and Pools. - There are no privately owned or other swimming baths open to the public in the Urban District.

(k) Eradication of Bed-Bugs. - No action under this heading has been found necessary.

6. INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

(a) Milk Supply. - There are no milk producers or cow-keepers within the Urban District.

Number of retail purveyors.....	7.
Number of dealers' licences in "T.T." Milk.....	6.

Four samples of undesignated milk were taken during the period and submitted for examination by the Plate Count and Coliform tests, with the following result: ..

Number of samples found to be satisfactory.....	3.
" " " " " unsatisfactory.....	1.

Thirty-three samples of rinsings from milk pails, churns, measures, etc., were taken and submitted for bacteriological examination, with the following result:

Number of samples found to be satisfactory.....	17.
" " " " " unsatisfactory.....	16.

Nineteen samples of ice cream were taken and submitted for bacteriological examination, with the following result:

Seven samples	...	...	...	Grade 1.
Three "	...	...	...	Grade 2.
Five "	...	...	...	Grade 3.
Four "	...	...	...	Grade 4.

(b) Inspection of Meat and other Foods. - There are eight butcher's shops within the Urban District.

The slaughtering of food animals in this area was discontinued under the Livestock (Restriction on Slaughtering) Order, 1940.

Fifty-four pigs belonging to "self-suppliers" have been slaughtered and inspected within this area.

The undermentioned foodstuffs have been condemned as unfit for human consumption during the year:

Meat and Offal.....	75¼ lbs.
Bacon.....	1½ lbs.
Butter.....	5½ lbs.
Flour.....	87½ lbs.
Sugar.....	89 lbs.
Tinned Meat.....	126½ lbs.
Tinned Fish.....	10 lbs.
Tinned Fruit.....	6¼ lbs.
Tinned Vegetables.....	13½ lbs.
Tinned Milk.....	46½ lbs.
Jam.....	5½ lbs.

Prepared food premises, restaurant kitchens, bakehouses and sausage making rooms, etc., are inspected regularly.

(c) Adulteration, Chemical and Bacteriological Examination of Food. - The appropriate Authority under this heading is the Norfolk County Council.

(d) Nutrition. - No special work in the dissemination of knowledge on this subject has been considered necessary.

- (e) Shellfish. - No shell-fish are gathered within the area of the Urban District.

7. INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

- (a) There were thirty cases of Measles and fifteen of Whooping-cough notified during the year, all in children under ten. No cases of Scarlet Fever, Diphtheria, Enteric Fever or Anterior Poliomyelitis were reported.

School notifications of suspected infectious disease or of contacts are regularly received.

The following tables give the cases notified:-

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES (OTHER THAN TUBERCULOSIS) DURING 1948.

Infectious Diseases	Cases Notified.								
	Under 1 yr.	1-2 yrs	2-3 yrs	3-4 yrs	4-5 yrs	5-10 yrs	10-15 yrs	15-20 yrs	20-35 yrs
Measles	5	14	-	4	-	6	1	-	-
Whooping-cough	2	2	-	6	-	4	1	-	-
Totals	7	16	-	10	-	10	2	-	-

	35-45 yrs.	45-65 yrs.	65 & over	At all Ages	Admitted to hospital	Deaths.
Measles	-	-	-	30	-	-
Whooping-cough	-	-	-	15	-	-
Totals	-	-	-	45	-	-

- (b) Diphtheria Immunisation. - On the 5th. July immunisation against diphtheria became the responsibility of the Norfolk County Council. During the six months prior to that date 20 cases were immunised. No cases of Diphtheria were reported.
- (c) Prevention of Blindness. - No action has been found necessary for the prevention or treatment of blindness.
- (d) Tuberculosis. - No action was found necessary under the Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1925, (relating to persons in the Milk Trade) or under Section 172 of the Public Health Act, 1936, (relating to compulsory removal to Hospital).

TUBERCULOSIS, 1948.

New Cases and Removals from Register.

	PULMONARY	NON PULMONARY
New Cases	3	-
Transfers	-	-
Removed from Register -		
(1) Recovered	-	1
(2) Left District	-	2
(3) Died	-	-

8. REPORT ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE FACTORIES ACT, 1937.

(a) Inspections for the purposes of provisions as to health. Including inspections made by the Sanitary Inspector.

Premises.	Number of		
	Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
FACTORIES with mechanical power	9	3	-
FACTORIES without " "	-	-	-
Other Premises under the Act	-	-	-
Total	9	3	-

(b) Defects found:

Particulars.	Number of Defects.			Number of defects in respect of which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred to H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness ...	1	1	-	-
Inadequate ventilation	-	-	-	-
Sanitary Conveniences (Insufficient unsuitable or defective not separate sexes	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
Other offences ...	-	-	-	-
Total	1	1	-	-

In conclusion, I wish to thank your Sanitary Inspector, Mr. R.H. Sershall, for his invaluable assistance in the preparation of this report.

I am, Mr. Chairman, Mrs. Howlett and Gentlemen,

Your Obedient Servant,

J. H. F. NORBURY.
M.B., B.S., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

Medical Officer of Health.

